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TAGS: [PREL](#) [UNSC](#) [PHUM](#) [BO](#)

SUBJECT: MFA CRITICIZES RAISING BELARUS AT UNSC, FEARS  
SANCTIONS

Classified By: Ambassador Karen Stewart for reason 1.4 (b/d).

#### Summary

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¶1. (C) On December 20, Deputy Director of the MFA's Americas Department Grigoriy Lyashuk presented Ambassador Belarus' concerns regarding possible sanctions resulting from the passage of the Belarus Democracy Reauthorization Act and the United State's use of the UN Security Council to raise the issue of human rights in Belarus. Ambassador did not make any assurance the USG would not implement further sanctions against Belarus. She also defended the decision to inform UN Security Council partners of the ongoing plight of political prisoners in the country. End summary.

#### Belarus Democracy Reauthorization Act (BDRA)

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¶2. (C) Lyachuk asked Ambassador whether reports on her December 19 press conference suggesting the USG was not considering new sanctions against Belarus as a result of the BDRA were accurate. Ambassador explained that while the BDRA contained congressional recommendations rather than mandates, she could not make any assurances the USG would not implement the BDRA's additional sanctions at a later date. The administration would carefully consider the BDRA provisions.

#### Raising Human Rights Violations at the UN Security Council

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¶3. (C) Lyashuk also criticized the USG for bringing up human rights at the United Nations Security Council. First, he stated the Security Council (UNSC) was not the proper forum for such an issue. Then Lyashuk proceeded to argue that Belarus did not threaten the security of its neighbors, noting the absence of terrorists in Belarus. Ambassador responded that by raising the issue at the UNSC, the USG once again demonstrated its high level of concern for people jailed on political charges. Furthermore, she said Belarus would become a more valuable European neighbor through democratization. Finally, she conveyed to Lyashuk concern over Belarus' arms sales to countries such as Syria and Iran that support terrorism.  
Stewart